



# A Closer Look: Rain Barrels and You...



Issue 2, June 2015

City of Greenwood Stormwater Department  
300 S. Madison Avenue, Greenwood, In 46142  
317-887-4711

## What is a rain barrel?

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. Usually a rain barrel is composed of a 55 gallon drum, a vinyl hose, PVC couplings, a screen grate to keep debris and insects out, and other off-the-shelf items, a rain barrel is relatively simple and inexpensive to construct and can sit conveniently under any residential gutter down spout.

## What are the advantages of a rain barrel?

Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer. A rain barrel collects water and stores it for when you need it most -- during periods of drought -- to water plants, wash your car, or to top a swimming pool. It provides an ample supply of free "soft water" to homeowners, containing no chlorine, lime or calcium making it ideal for gardens, flower pots, and car and window washing. A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months. Saving water not only helps protect the environment, it saves you money and energy (decreased demand for treated tap water). Diverting water from storm drains also decreases the impact of runoff to streams. Therefore, a rain barrel is an easy way for you to have a consistent supply of clean, fresh water for outdoor use, FREE.

## How to Build a Rain Barrel

A rain barrel is a great tool for watering a garden while conserving water. Try building your own rain barrel with a spigot at the base.

**Step 1:** Collect Rain Barrel Materials

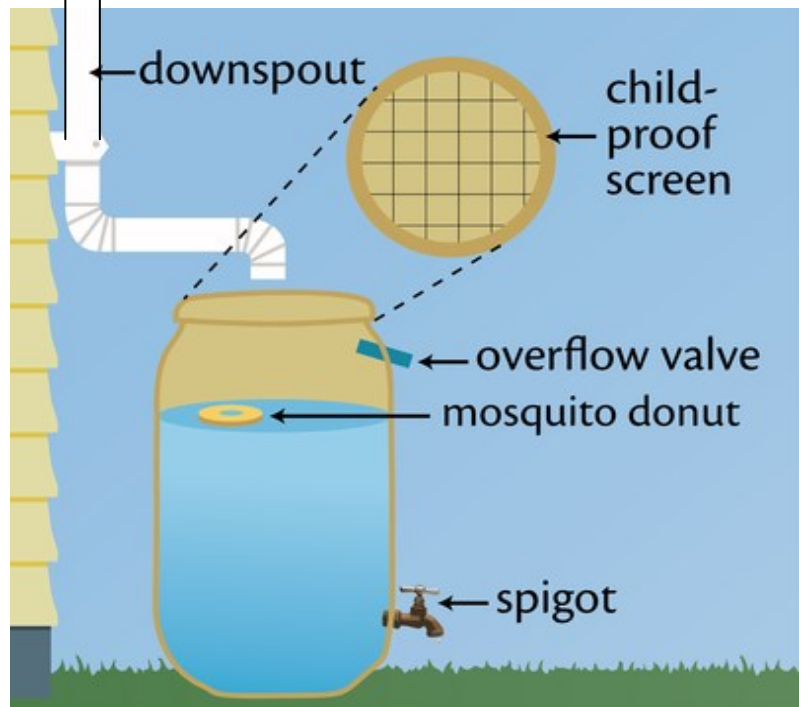
**Step 2:** Insert spigot into Rain Barrel

**Step 3:** Add child-proof screen

**Step 4:** Cut hole for overflow valve

**Step 5:** Add mosquito donut

**Step 6:** Collect and use your rain water



**Take the Pledge:** Want to help improve the quality of the water in our local streams and reservoirs? Take a pledge at [www.ClearChoicesCleanWater.org](http://www.ClearChoicesCleanWater.org)! If we all make a few small changes in our daily routines, we can really make a difference in our water quality. Once you pledge, view the interactive map to see how many of your friends, family, and neighbors are doing the same!